United Nations A/C.6/56/SR.8

General Assembly
Fifty-sixth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
22 October 2001

Original: English

Sixth Committee

Summary record of the 8th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 12 October 2001, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Lelong ..... (Haiti)

Contents

Agenda item 165: Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization (*continued*)

Agenda item 172: Observer status for the International Hydrographic Organization in the General Assembly (*continued*)

Agenda item 173: Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

01-57831 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 165: Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization (*continued*) (A/56/33, A/56/303 and A/56/330)

1. **Mr. Mun** Jong Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), referring to the topic of provision of assistance to third States affected by sanctions in accordance with Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations, said that, in accordance with the Charter, sanctions should be applied only to cope with threats to international peace and security. In most cases, however, sanctions imposed by the Security Council served to realize the political purposes of some countries rather than to seek a fair solution to problems. Certain sanctions, in particular, had been abused as a means of toppling Governments and destroying the political and economic systems of targeted countries by imposing intolerable sufferings on their people. If the Security Council ignored the impact of such sanctions, its credibility would eventually be undermined.

2. Sanctions should be lifted once their initial purposes had been realized. His delegation supported the proposals to establish a legal framework to define a clear time frame for sanctions and periodically assessing their effects. The proposal that Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions should be approved by the General Assembly also deserved consideration.

3. His delegation also wished to bring to the attention of the Committee the unilateral abuse of the Charter by a certain country. For over 50 years a so-called United Nations force had existed on the Korean peninsula which had neither a legal basis nor any justification for its existence. That force had been organized by the United States of America in pursuit of its own interests, and the United Nations had no authority over the "United Nations Command" in terms of its political, military and financial aspects. His delegation believed that the United Nations should, in the light of positive developments on the Korean peninsula, take appropriate steps to dismantle the "United Nations Command", which was a vestige of the cold war.

4. **Mr. Akamatsu** (Japan) said that the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization had recorded some commendable achievements, particularly the adoption of General Assembly resolution 50/52, which expressed the Assembly's intention to initiate the procedure to amend the Charter by the deletion of the "enemy State" clauses from Articles 53, 77 and 107. Nevertheless, its productivity had been regrettably low in recent years. While some delegations had noted that the Special Committee's working methods had improved, during its most recent session most of its meetings had begun 40 or 45 minutes after the scheduled time. Moreover, at that session, fewer than 50 delegations had attended the meetings consistently, even though the Special Committee's membership had been expanded in 1995 to include all Member States.

5. During the past three years, his delegation had strongly advocated a review of the Special Committee's working methods, and had proposed specific measures to enhance its efficiency. His delegation expressed appreciation to those delegations which had offered useful comments on the proposal.

6. The time was right for the Special Committee to have an in-depth discussion of the question of the implementation of the Charter's provisions related to third States affected by sanctions. His delegation expressed appreciation for the report submitted by the Secretary-General and the ad hoc working group and believed that they should be the focus of the Sixth Committee's consideration.

7. With regard to the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, his delegation stressed the importance of those publications, not only for delegations but also for the general public. He commended the Secretariat's efforts to expedite their preparation and publication.

8. His delegation expressed appreciation to the delegations of Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom for their further revisions of the draft resolution on dispute prevention and settlement (A/56/33, chap. IV). His delegation had no difficulty in supporting the draft resolution and trusted that it would be adopted at the next session of the Special Committee.

9. Lastly, with regard to the identification of new subjects (A/56/33, chap. VII), his delegation hoped that the Special Committee would make efforts to finalize the subjects which it was currently addressing before

tackling new ones. It would be useful to devise a mechanism for identifying new subjects to be addressed without infringing upon the right of Member States to propose subjects for consideration.

10. **Mr. Fadaifard** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the Special Committee had striven hard in recent years to define a new role for itself. On the one hand, there were notable attempts to reinvigorate the Special Committee by inscribing fresh items on its agenda. On the other hand, efforts were being made to reform the Special Committee in line with the overall reform of the Organization. In his delegation's view, both initiatives were valuable and should continue in parallel. In the meantime, the Special Committee should accord priority to those items that had been on its agenda for several years and that enjoyed sufficient support.

11. His delegation believed that the time had come to undertake serious negotiations within the Special Committee on the implementation of Charter provisions related to assistance to third States affected by sanctions. The findings and conclusions of the ad hoc expert group had been before the Special Committee for more than two years (A/53/312). The thrust of those recommendations was to give a mandate to the Secretariat to conduct advance and post assessments of the impact of sanctions on targeted and third States. In accordance with the recommendations, the Secretariat was also required to provide technical assistance to States which invoked Article 50 of the Charter and to appoint a special representative in extremely severe cases. His delegation believed that those recommendations provided a sound basis for negotiations.

12. The Russian Federation's proposal entitled "Basic conditions and standard criteria for the introduction of sanctions and other coercive measures and their implementation" (A/56/33, chap. III) was also valuable and timely. His delegation shared the emerging view that the time had come to apply the experience gained from the use of mandatory sanctions in the past decade and to develop a generally agreed sanctions regime. As reflected in the report of the Special Committee (A/56/33), the Russian Federation's proposal had been the subject of paragraph-by-paragraph consideration at the two previous sessions of the Special Committee. His delegation encouraged the sponsoring delegation to prepare a revised version of the document on the basis of that discussion and submit it for further consideration.

13. While mindful of the ongoing efforts in the Security Council to conduct a comprehensive review of the sanctions regime, his delegation believed that those initiatives should not prevent the General Assembly from playing its due role in standard-setting with regard to international relations in general and sanctions in particular. Standard-setting in respect of sanctions should focus on Charter-based sanctions only. Unilateral sanctions, which violated the accepted norms and principles of international law, had no place in that exercise. The international community had repeatedly denounced economic coercion as a means of achieving political goals; he drew attention to General Assembly resolutions 53/10 and 54/200 in that regard.

14. His delegation commended the Special Committee for elaborating a number of instruments to facilitate the resort by Member States to the dispute settlement mechanisms provided for in the Charter. His delegation reiterated, however, the importance of the principle of the free choice of means, as laid down in Article 33 of the Charter and reaffirmed by many other international instruments. Those points were covered in the revised version of the proposal submitted by Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom (A/56/33, chap. IV), which should be finalized at the next session of the Special Committee.

15. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 45/45, all subsidiary bodies of the Assembly were required to keep their working methods under constant review with a view to improving their functioning. In his delegation's view, the Special Committee's agenda was overloaded. A number of ideas had been put forward to deal with that difficulty, including the revised working paper submitted by Japan (A/AC.182/L.108) (A/56/33, para. 267). That paper contained a number of useful elements for consensus-building.

16. Nevertheless, his delegation reiterated that the General Assembly should assign priority items for each session of the Special Committee, and the Special Committee should concentrate on those items with a view to finalizing them as early as possible. In that connection, proposals relating to sanctions could be considered as priority items at the next session of the Special Committee.

17. **Mr. Al-Kâdhe** (Iraq) said that the Special Committee's task had been made more difficult by recent events, which had been characterized by: (i) the use of double standards in taking up political positions; (ii) the prevalence of power politics in international relations to the detriment of a balance of rights, duties and shared responsibility in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law; (iii) the imposition of unilateral policies through the use of arrangements lying outside the international order and relying on such arrangements as an alternative to the United Nations in cases where the hegemonistic Powers anticipated strong opposition from the United Nations; (iv) the subordination of the established rules of international law to unilateral policies through the introduction of bizarre interpretations of those rules; (v) the shirking of responsibilities in cases where it would not be economically advantageous to carry out such responsibilities; (vi) the use of human rights by certain States as a political weapon and on a selective basis in order thereby to blackmail and exert political pressure on other States; and (vii) the imposition of the economic sanctions provided for in the Charter in order to control the Security Council.

18. As a result of those negative phenomena, power was taking precedence over law in international relations; the Security Council was being exploited and made merely an instrument for attaining narrow, individual interests and turned into a forum for a single dominant Power; and the principles of justice and fairness in international law were not being upheld.

19. The Special Committee could fulfil its objectives only if the political will existed for the United Nations to address future and ongoing challenges successfully, reflecting the wishes of the membership as a whole. The Charter had been drafted on that basis and provided for the pursuit of the common interest. Unfortunately, a single State, namely the United States of America, was currently seeking to impose its hegemony on the Organization in the pursuit of its imperialistic objectives. The United Nations should therefore now seek to ensure the proper application of the Charter and to prevent one-sidedness in the Organization's decisions and in the positions it adopted.

20. The main step in that connection would be to reform the decision-making process in the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council. There was no certainty that the Charter would be properly applied unless all States, both large and small, adhered to its principles, particularly the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Accordingly, the Special Committee should occupy a prominent place among the committees of the United Nations. He called on Member States to participate seriously in its work, to enable it to give expression to the international will and thereby to enhance the role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, promoting cooperation among States, strengthening the rules of international law and correcting the imbalance between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

21. Referring to chapter III of the Special Committee's report (A/56/33), he said that his delegation welcomed the revised working paper submitted by the Russian Federation, which had received wide support from the members. He also drew attention to the working paper submitted by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on the strengthening of certain principles concerning the impact and application of sanctions and called on States to conclude their study of the two documents and to make recommendations to the Sixth Committee on the basic conditions and criteria for the imposition of sanctions.

22. His delegation was interested in that issue because of the comprehensive sanctions, amounting to genocide, which for more than a decade had been imposed on his country. There was no doubt that the brutal imposition of comprehensive sanctions, exacting vengeance on an entire people, were a continuing flagrant breach of the United Nations Charter, of international law and of international humanitarian law. For that reason, certain States had looked for a new name for the sanctions, calling them "smart sanctions", thus clearly implying that the sanctions that had been, and were continuing to be, applied against his country were stupid sanctions, from which hundreds of thousands of people had suffered. The new name was merely another means of pursuing the aim of destroying a people and breaking its resolve.

23. His delegation supported the proposals submitted by Cuba and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on strengthening the role of the Organization. His delegation considered that democracy in the United Nations was currently facing a serious challenge because the General Assembly's role with respect to the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter was being marginalized and because

the Security Council had in recent years been appropriating responsibilities that exceeded those laid down in the Charter. The United States was dominating and exploiting the Security Council in order to attain its narrow political objectives. When the United States was unable fully to impose its will on the Security Council, it endeavoured to bring to a standstill its work for the maintenance of international peace and security.

24. In that connection he said that the entire world was a witness to the crimes being committed by the Israeli forces of occupation against the Palestinian people in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the principles of international humanitarian law. When the Council had endeavoured to perform its role under the Charter it had found itself in confrontation with the United States, which had threatened to use its right of veto in the event of the adoption of a strong resolution calling on the occupying Power to desist from armed aggression against the Palestinian people, and it had actually used its veto when a majority of members of the Council had decided to adopt a resolution to ensure the creation of a mechanism to protect the Palestinian people. The United States still continued to prevent the Security Council from holding the Zionist entity responsible for the aggression and for attempting to destroy the will of the Palestinian people.

25. His delegation had on previous occasions notified the Special Committee of other hostile activities undertaken by the United States against Iraq in violation of the provisions of the Charter, including its imposition of no-flight zones, its interference in Iraq's internal affairs, its determination to perpetuate the sanctions against it and its announcement of its intention to change the political regime in Iraq through the use of mercenaries to which it gave financial and military support. For those reasons his country strongly supported the revised working paper submitted by Belarus and the Russian Federation proposing that an advisory opinion be requested of the International Court of Justice concerning the legality of the use of force without the approval of the Security Council and outside the role of self-defence.

26. In conclusion, his delegation rejected any call to reduce the two-week period set aside for sessions of the Special Committee, as it considered that to be the minimum amount of time necessary to enable the Special Committee to carry out its work. He pointed out that, at its two most recent sessions, the Special Committee had found the period of two weeks to be insufficient for discussion of the items on its agenda. The failure of the Special Committee to achieve anything substantial had been due to the lack of political will on the part of a number of States to strengthen the United Nations and give effect to the Charter.

27. **Mr. Moin-ul-Haque** (Pakistan), referring to the implementation of Charter provisions related to assistance to third States affected by sanctions (A/56/33, chap. III), said his delegation agreed with Ukraine that a certain degree of stagnation had crept into the Special Committee's work on the topic. His delegation too was awaiting with keen interest the Secretary-General's views concerning the feasibility of implementing the recommendations of the ad hoc expert group, which would assist the Special Committee in its work.

28. During its most recent session, the Special Committee had considered the revised Russian proposal entitled "Basic conditions and standard criteria for the introduction of sanctions and other coercive measures and their implementation" (A/56/33, chap. III). Over the years, the Security Council had imposed a wide range of measures ranging from arms embargoes to the freezing of bank accounts. Sanctions and non-military measures were considered by some as an effective policy tool in response to threats to international peace and security, while for others, sanctions were a blunt and counterproductive instrument.

29. Pakistan was opposed to sanctions as a matter of principle and considered that the Security Council should not resort to them in the absence of a visible threat to international peace and security or without first endeavouring to resolve the problem in other ways. Preventive diplomacy through constructive engagement was preferable to punitive measures. Sanctions often failed to achieve the desired objectives and resulted in suffering for civilian populations; thus, the Security Council should adopt a clear, uniform and impartial mechanism for imposing, implementing and lifting them. He hoped that the Russian proposal would provide useful input to the debate.

30. He looked forward to constructive discussion of the proposals submitted by the delegations of Cuba, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom at the next session of the Special Committee.

31. He also thanked the delegation of Japan for its timely proposal on improving the Special Committee's working methods; however, he hoped that the Committee's important role in the reform and revitalization of the United Nations would not be forgotten and that its spirit of cooperation and goodwill would not be affected during the streamlining process. Lack of progress on some proposals was due not to poor working methods, but rather to an absence of political will. He was confident, however, that an increased spirit of cooperation and better understanding would make the Special Committee's discussions more focused and result-oriented in future sessions.

32. **Mr. Erwa** (Sudan) said that recent events had made the Special Committee's role even more difficult than it had been. Little substantial progress had so far been made in reviewing the Charter, revitalizing the work of the United Nations and reforming the Security Council. Work should continue, however, particularly as the current problems on the international scene were likely to prove temporary. When international relations improved, all States, large and small, would be able to contribute on an equal basis to ensuring international peace and security.

33. It would be a serious matter if the Security Council were to become merely a tool in the service of narrow interests, as it would mean that the United Nations had become no more than a club for the victors in the Second World War and a place for those who dominated the club to settle scores. The sanctions regime should therefore be made more transparent, and sanctions should be used only as a last resort where there was a real threat to international peace and security.

34. His delegation supported the suggestions, including those offered by some permanent members of the Security Council, that sanctions should be time-limited and should not be renewed in the absence of a specific decision to that effect. Otherwise, there was a risk that sanctions would become an immoral means of imposing penalties contrary to the wishes of the international community as a whole. His delegation had appreciated the efforts made over the past year by certain permanent members of the Security Council to specify time limits for sanctions imposed by the Council. Those States had performed a service to the principles of reform, transparency and democracy within the Council and in international relations and had shown that they were carrying out their obligations as specified in the Charter, rather than serving special interests and a political agenda.

35. In that connection, he said that his delegation had been pleased by the decision of the Security Council in its resolution 1372 (2001) to lift the sanctions on his country that had been imposed in 1996. That resolution had been the result of enormous efforts made by his country in cooperation with the international community within the Security Council. His delegation called for the sanctions imposed on Iraq and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to be lifted also.

36. He supported the proposals contained in the revised working papers submitted by Belarus and the Russian Federation, the two working papers submitted by Cuba at the sessions of the Special Committee in 1997 and 1998 and the proposal of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya contained in document A/AC.182/L.99. Such constructive proposals would strengthen the efforts being made to increase the effectiveness and transparency of the organs of the United Nations.

37. The reform of the Security Council inevitably meant restoring the authority of the General Assembly under the Charter, since experience had shown that attempts were constantly being made to render the General Assembly an ineffectual and powerless body contrary to the Charter. His delegation was optimistic, however, that a spirit of cooperation would prevail and would make it possible to overcome all problems.

38. **Mr. Medrek** (Morocco) said he regretted that the Special Committee had made little progress on the important issue of assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions, which had been on its agenda for several years. A solution to that problem must be found without delay, particularly as sanctions had been resorted to with increasing frequency in recent years. While the Security Council had the power to impose sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, it was also responsible for the payment of compensation for the harm suffered by third States.

39. Economic embargoes and sanctions had serious consequences for civilian populations, particularly those of developing countries. Thus, they should be resorted to only when all the other peaceful methods for settling disputes had been exhausted and should be imposed for specific periods of time and with precise conditions for lifting or suspending them and regular review of their effectiveness. Lack of progress on taking concrete measures to address the concerns of

third States could have consequences for the success of sanctions regimes, which relied upon the support of all States. He therefore welcomed the Security Council's decision to establish on a temporary basis an informal working group to develop general recommendations on ways to improve the effectiveness of United Nations sanctions and awaited with interest the conclusions and recommendations of the ad hoc expert group meeting on developing a methodology for assessing the consequences incurred by third States as a result of prevention or enforcement measures and on exploring innovative and practical measures of international assistance to the affected third States, as contained in the 1998 report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of provisions of the Charter related to assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions (A/53/312, sect. IV).

40. He also welcomed the revised proposal submitted by Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom on dispute prevention and settlement (A/AC.182/L.111), which continued to focus on existing means of settling disputes and on the freedom of choice between those methods; he hoped that the Special Committee would be able to complete its consideration of that document at its next session.

41. He regretted the backlog in publication of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* and urged the Secretariat to continue its efforts to ensure their publication in all official languages; to that end, he encouraged Member States to continue providing financial and other necessary assistance.

42. Lastly, he noted the differing views on the role of the Trusteeship Council and said that the matter required further consideration with a view to the achievement of consensus on a solution that would respond to the concerns of the international community as a whole.

43. **Mr. Im** Han-taek (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations related to assistance to third States affected by the applications of sanctions (A/56/303) and shared the general hope that the international community would make joint efforts to achieve the goal of "smart sanctions" that were both humane and effective. Sanctions should be targeted towards a specific group of people, limited in scope, reasonably flexible with regard to exemptions and designed to minimize their adverse impact on third States.

44. He took note of the improvements and clarifications made in the revised proposal submitted by Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom; despite lingering doubts about the feasibility of implementing such a proposed mechanism for dispute prevention and settlement, his delegation considered it worthy of further consideration by the Special Committee.

45. He stressed the need to streamline and focus the Special Committee's work and supported the proposals put forward by various delegations. Such proposals should be submitted as early as possible to allow for in-depth study in advance of the sessions; close coordination with the other working groups involved in the reform of the Organization was essential in order to avoid overlapping. The Special Committee should establish clear priorities for consideration of proposals and should decide whether to establish a cut-off mechanism to prevent discussions of specific topics from dragging on for many years with few tangible results.

46. The Special Committee should carefully weigh the merits and drawbacks of proposals for the abolition or reconstitution of the Trusteeship Council; the issue should be considered in the broader context of the overall reform of the Organization. The Council might evolve into a forum for Member States' exercise of their collective trusteeship over issues of global concern, such as the environment, and might serve as a link between the United States and civil society on such issues.

47. **Mr. Arbogast** (United States of America) said that, as the report of the Special Committee (A/56/33) reflected in its summary of increasingly academic debate, no useful purpose was served by devoting finite resources to proposals that duplicated or significantly overlapped work that was inappropriate or had been assigned elsewhere. Proposals purporting to suggest general principles for peacekeeping missions and sanctions regimes, urging review of the use-of-force authority or seeking to address general issues concerning Security Council and the General Assembly prerogatives had received an exceedingly sufficient airing, and the Special Committee should turn its attention to more practical work.

48. The Special Committee had, however, done productive work on the effects of sanctions on third States; it was partly as a result of those efforts that the issue was being considered by the working group of the Security Council on general issues relating to sanctions. The ad hoc expert group's report (A/53/312), including its conclusion that the global and regional financial institutions should play the lead role in assessing and addressing the economic consequences incurred by third States, had stimulated more focused thinking on the issues and, in particular, on the role of international organizations within and outside the United Nations system. He noted the Secretary-General's statement concerning the feasibility of implementing the recommendations of the ad hoc expert group considering the limited capacity and resources of the Secretariat and the ongoing review being conducted by several intergovernmental bodies that were concerned with those issues.

49. Dispute prevention and settlement mechanisms constituted another subject which the Special Committee was well suited to discuss. His delegation believed that consensus on the revised proposal of Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom could be achieved at the Special Committee's next session and that the ideas contained therein could increase access to and awareness of dispute settlement tools and enhance the Organization's early warning and dispute prevention capabilities. It also supported efforts to update the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council*, including the creation of a Trust Fund for that purpose.

50. Lastly, he welcomed the Japanese initiative aimed at making the Special Committee more productive through rationalization of its work and efficient use of resources. The Special Committee should not meet solely for the sake of holding meetings or serve as a forum for some Member States' diatribes against others; it should meet only when, and for as long as, absolutely necessary.

51. **Mr. Kittichaisaree** (Thailand) said that there was a clear need to facilitate reduction of the hardships that sanctions regimes caused to third States and their civilian populations through a strategy of "smart sanctions", focused targeting of sanctions and the development of relevant criteria applicable to sanctions regimes. The Special Committee should therefore begin a comprehensive review of those issues.

52. With respect to the revised working paper submitted by the Russian Federation (A/AC.182/L.100/Rev.1), he agreed that there was some merit in considering the need to impose sanctions for only a limited period, review periodically their efficiency and conformity with human rights principles and allow for the temporary lifting of sanctions in certain extreme circumstances. However, although the working paper submitted by the Russian Federation entitled "Fundamentals of the legal basis for the United Nations peacekeeping operations in the context of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations" (A/AC.182/L.89/Add.2 and Corr.1) also raised matters of importance, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations would be the most appropriate body to deal with that issue.

53. His Government was committed to the obligation to settle disputes by peaceful means under Article 33, paragraph 1, of the Charter. He regretted that it had not been possible to achieve consensus on the text of the proposal submitted by Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom and hoped that the revised version would serve as a basis for continued discussion with a view to rapid approval.

54. He also regretted that the International Court of Justice, which had been established as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations in Article 92 of the Charter, had become rather exclusive in membership and accessibility and had failed to dispose of cases in a timely manner. Five of the Court's 15 judges represented the permanent members of the Security Council; its workload was heavy and its human and financial resources inadequate. Moreover, States which did not meet the criteria for free legal aid must pay an exclusive group of legal counsel at an hourly rate of £400-500 per person. He urged the Special Committee and the delegations of Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom, both of which had nationals among the Court's judges, to seriously consider the Court's shortcomings and to give priority to the need for appropriate reform.

55. Rapid progress in reducing the backlog in publication of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and the *Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council* was hampered by a lack of resources. He thanked States which had made contributions to the Trust Fund established for that purpose and welcomed efforts to ensure the speedy,

efficient dissemination of publications by, inter alia, placing volumes of the *Repertory* on the Internet.

56. Lastly, he noted that Article 39 of the Charter stated that the Security Council would determine the existence of any act of aggression; he urged the Special Committee to give priority to considering how the Council could discharge that mandate in order to accommodate the interest of international criminal justice in prosecuting those responsible for terrorism before the International Criminal Court.

57. **Mr. Bakar** (Indonesia) said that it was important to pursue efforts to achieve a consensus on the implementation of Charter provisions related to assistance to third States affected by sanctions, because recent cases had shown that the imposition of economic sanctions caused tremendous hardship to the peoples of third States, especially in developing countries. The Security Council had primary responsibility for alleviating their plight through the establishment of a mechanism to provide relief. In that connection, the position set out by the Movement of the Non-Aligned Countries in the Cartagena Declaration and the proposal that a trust fund should be created to address the harsh realities faced by third States both had merit.

58. The recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/56/303) were commendable. It was to be hoped that the Security Council would continue its attempts to reach agreement on measures to improve the procedures and working methods of its sanctions committee. His delegation also welcomed the Secretary-General's full support for the review of the Secretariat's capacity to implement the recommendations of the ad hoc expert group on assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions and considered that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Coordination had major roles to play in that field. The negative impact of all the sanctions regimes in operation should be investigated, as some of them had had catastrophic repercussions on the most vulnerable sectors of society in non-target States. Such action would heighten the credibility and authority of the United Nations when it had to deal with situations undermining international peace and security. For that reason, the proposals contained in the working papers of the Russian Federation and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya deserved further study.

59. Similarly, his country trusted that the question of strengthening the role of the Organization and enhancing its effectiveness in the maintenance of international peace and security through a reform of the Security Council, a topic discussed in the working papers of Cuba and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, would be treated with the importance it deserved.

60. As for the revised working paper submitted by Japan on improving the working methods of the Special Committee, his Government supported all steps to improve the Committee's efficiency and effectiveness, since it was convinced that Member States should strive to ensure that the United Nations promoted a peaceful, just and prosperous society for all humankind through a strengthening of the Charter's provisions.

61. **The Chairman** said that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 165.

Agenda item 172: Observer status for the International Hydrographic Organization in the General Assembly (*continued*) (A/C.6/56/L.2)

62. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Sixth Committee wished to adopt resolution A/C.6/56/L.2 without a vote.

63. *It was so decided.*

64. **Mr. Boisson** (Monaco) announced that Bangladesh had joined the International Hydrographic Organization in July, bringing the number of its members to 71.

Agenda item 173: Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly (A/56/191)

65. **Mr. Erwa** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of all the members of the Community of the Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), said they believed that observer status would greatly enhance future cooperation and ensure more effective results for both organizations. The 16 members were striving to achieve overall economic union based on the implementation of a strategy involving development plans that were complementary to the national development plans of member States and that included investment in the agricultural, industrial, social and cultural fields and in energy. The Community looked towards its financial

future with every confidence and hoped that the resolution would be passed unanimously.

66. **Mr. Touré** (Burkina Faso) said that, as Articles 52 and 53 of the Charter of the United Nations encouraged the establishment of regional organizations like the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States, his delegation firmly supported the statement by the representative of the Sudan.

67. **Mr. Ekedede** (Nigeria) said that his country was co-sponsoring the draft resolution because it was convinced that the granting of observer status to the Community would not only bolster its activities for the advancement of economic and social development, but would also help it to maximize its contact with other international organizations.

68. **Mr. Fomba** (Mali) and **Mr. Tankoano** (Niger), both speaking on behalf of countries which were founding members of the Community, said they supported the resolution submitted by the Sudan and hoped that it would be adopted by consensus, as its adoption and implementation would help the Community and the United Nations to consolidate their cooperation in the economic and social spheres and would thus promote a global approach in an endeavour to find lasting solutions to the economic and social difficulties facing the Community.

69. **The Chairman** announced that the debate on agenda item 172 would be continued on the Friday of the following week.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.